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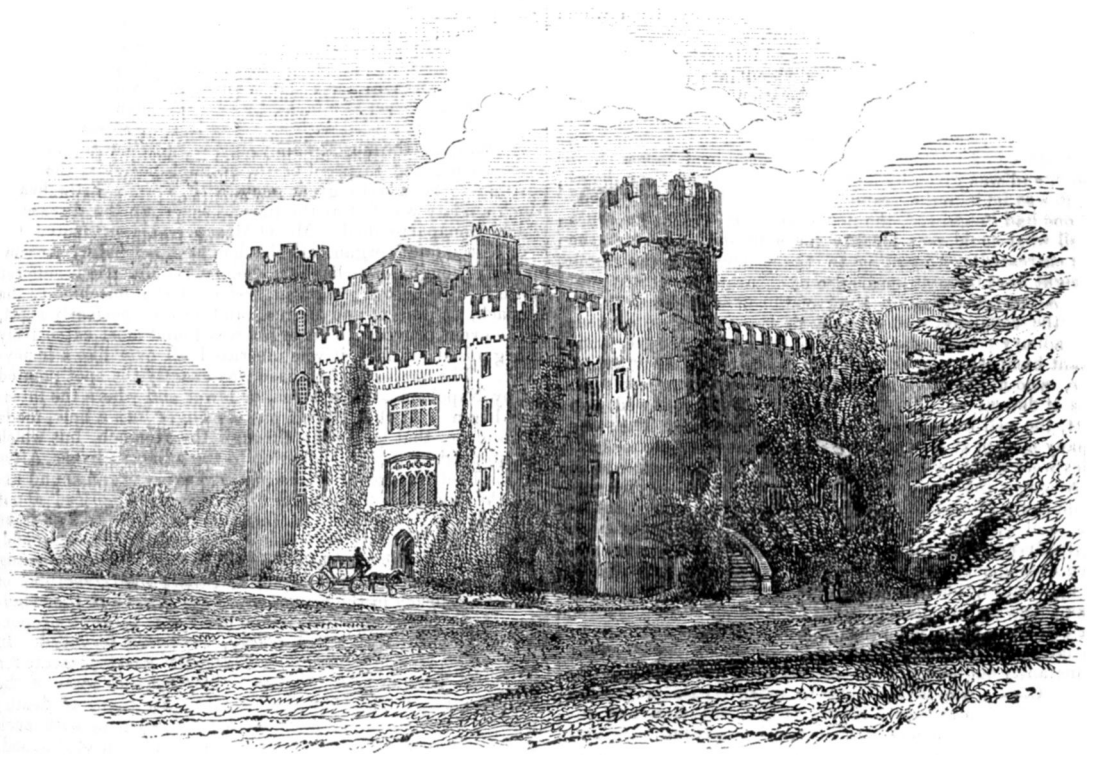
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MALAHIDE CASTLE, COUNTY OF DUBLIN.

An ancient baronial castle, in good preservation and still inhabited by the lineal descendant of its original founder, is a rare object to find in Ireland; and the causes which have led to this circumstance are too obvious to require an explanation. In Malahide Castle we have, however, a highly interesting example of this kind; for though in its present state it owes much of its imposing effect to modern restorations and improvements, it still retains a considerable portion of very ancient date, and most probably even some parts of the original castle erected in the reign of King Henry II. Considered in this way, Malahide Castle is without a rival in interest, not only in our metropolitan county, but also perhaps within the boundary of the old English pale.

The Castle of Malahide is placed on a gently elevated situation on a limestone rock near the village or town from which it derives its name, and of which, with its picturesque bay, it commands a beautiful prospect. In its general form it is quadrangular and nearly approaching to a square, flanked on its south or principal front by circular towers, with a fine "Gothic" entrance porch in the centre. Its proportions are of considerable grandeur, and its picturesqueness is greatly heightened by the masses of luxuriant ivy which mantle its walls. For much of its present architectural magnificence it is however indebted to its present proprietor, and his father the late Colonel Talbot. The structure, as it appeared in the commencement of the last century, was of contracted dimensions, and had wholly lost its original castellated charac-

ter, though its ancient moat still remained. This moat is however now filled up, and its sloping surface is converted into a green-sward, and planted with Italian cypresses and other evergreens.

Interesting, however, as this ancient mansion is in its exterior appearance, it is perhaps still more so in its interior features. Its spacious hall, roofed with timber-work of oak, is of considerable antiquity; but its attraction is eclipsed by another apartment of equal age and vastly superior beauty, with which indeed in its way there is nothing, as far as we know, to be compared in Ireland. This unique apartment is wainscotted throughout with oak elaborately carved, in compartments, with subjects derived from scripture history, and though Gothic in their general character, some of them are executed with considerable skill; while the chimney-piece, which exhibits in its central division figures of the Virgin and Child, is carved with a singular degree of elegance and beauty. The whole is richly varnished, and from the blackness of tint which the wood has acquired from time, the apartment, as Mr Brewer well observes, assumes the resemblance of one vast cabinet of ebony.

The other apartments, of which there are ten on each floor, are of inferior architectural pretensions, though some of them are of lofty and spacious proportions. But they are not without attractions of a high order, being enriched with some costly specimens of porcelain, and their walls covered with the more valuable ornaments of a collection of original por-

traits and paintings by the old masters. Among the former the most remarkable are portraits of Charles I. and Queen Henrietta Maria, by Vandyke; James II. and his queen, Anne Hyde, by Sir Peter Lely; Queen Anne, by Sir Godfrey Kneller; the Duchess of Portsmouth, mistress to Charles II.; the first Duke of Richmond (son of the above duchess) when a child; Richard Talbot, the celebrated Duke of Tirconnel, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, general and minister to James II., by Sir Peter Lely; the Ladies Catherine and Charlotte Talbot, daughters of the duke, by Sir P. Lely; with many other portraits of illustrious members of the Talbot family. The portraits of the Duchess of Portsmouth and her son were presented by herself to Mrs Wogan of Rathcoffy, from whom they were inherited by Colonel Talbot.

Among the pictures of more general interest, the most distinguished is a small altar piece divided into compartments, and representing the Nativity, Adoration, and Circumcision. This most valuable and interesting picture is the work of Albert Durer, and is said to have belonged to the unfortunate Mary Queen of Scots. It was purchased by Charles II. for £2000, and was given by him to the Duchess of Portsmouth, who presented it to the grandmother of the late Col. Talbot.

As already observed, the noble family of Talbot have been seated in their present locality for a period of nearly seven hundred years! According to the pedigree of the family, drawn up with every appearance of accuracy by Sir William Betham, Richard Talbot, the second son of Richard Talbot, Lord of Eccleswell and Linton, in Herefordshire, who was living in 1153, having accompanied King Henry II. into Ireland, obtained from that monarch the lordship of Malahide, being part of the two cantreds of Leinster, in the neighbourhood of Dublin, which King Henry had reserved, when he granted the rest of the province to Richard Earl of Strongbow, to be held as a noble fief of the crown of England. It is at all events certain, as appears from the chartulary or register of Mary's Abbey, now in the British Museum, that this Richard Talbot granted to St Mary's Abbey in Dublin certain lands called Venenbristen, which lie between Croscurry and the lands of Hamon Mac Kirky, in pure and perpetual alms, that the monks there might pray for the health of his soul and that of his brother Roger, and their ancestors; and that he also leased certain lands in Malahide and Portmarnock to the monks of the same abbey. From this Richard Talbot the present Lord Talbot de Malahide descends in the twentieth generation, and in the twenty-fourth from Richard Talbot, a Norman baron who held Hereford Castle in the time of the Conqueror. The noble Earls of Shrewsbury and Talbot are of the same stock, but descend from Gilbert, the elder brother of Richard, who was Lord of Eccleswell and Linton, and was living in 1190.

There can be no question, therefore, of the noble origin of the Talbots de Malahide, nor can their title be considered as a mushroom one, though only conferred upon the mother of the present lord; for Sir William Betham shows that his ancestor, Thomas Talbot, knight and lord of Malahide, who had livery of his estate in 1349, was summoned by the sheriff of Dublin to the Magnum Concilium, or Great Council, held in Dublin in 1372, 46 Edward III., and again to the Magnum Concilium held on Saturday, in the vigils of the holy Trinity, 48 Edward III., 1374, by special writ directed to himself by the name of "*Thome Talbot, Militis*." He was also summoned by writ to the Parliament of Ireland in the same year. If therefore it could be ascertained that this Thomas Talbot actually took his seat under that writ, it would be clear that his lineal heir-male and heir-general, the present baron, has a just claim to the honours and dignity which he has so recently acquired.

The manor of Malahide was created by charter as early as the reign of King Henry II., and its privileges were confirmed and enlarged by King Edward IV. in 1475. This, we believe, still remains in the possession of the chief of the family, but various other extensive possessions of his ancestors passed to junior branches of his house, and have been long alienated from his family.

Among the most memorable circumstances of general interest connected with the history of this castle and its possessors, should be mentioned what Mr Brewer properly calls "a lamentable instance of the ferocity with which quarrels of party rivalry were conducted in ages during which the internal polity of Ireland was injuriously neglected by the supreme head of government:—On Whitsun-eve, in the year 1329, as is recorded by Ware, John de Birmingham, Earl of Louth,

Richard Talbot, styled Lord of Malahide, and many of their kindred, together with sixty of their English followers, were slain in a pitched battle at Balbriggan [Ballybragan] in this neighbourhood, by the Anglo-Norman faction of the De Verdons, De Gernons, and Savages: the cause of animosity being the election of the earl to the palatinate dignity of Louth, the county of the latter party."

At a later period the Talbots of Malahide had a narrow escape from a calamity nearly as bad as death itself—the total loss of their rank and possessions. Involved of necessity by their political and religious principles in the troubles of the middle of the seventeenth century, they could hardly have escaped the persecution of the party assuming government in the name of the parliament. John Talbot of Malahide having been indicted and outlawed for acting in the Irish rebellion, his castle, with five hundred acres of arable land, was granted by lease, dated 21st December 1653, for seven years, to the regicide Miles Corbet, who resided here for several years after, till, being himself outlawed in turn at the period of the Restoration, he took shipping from its port for the continent. More fortunate, however, than the representatives of most other families implicated in the events of this unhappy period, Mr Talbot was by the act of explanation in 1665 restored to all his lands and estates in the county of Dublin, as he had held the same in 1641, only subject to quit rents. It is said that during the occupation of Malahide by Corbet it became for a short time the abode of Cromwell himself; but this statement, we believe, only rests on popular tradition—a chronicler which has been too fond of making similar statements respecting Irish castles generally, to merit attention and belief.

Our limits will not permit us on the present occasion to enter on any description of the picturesque ruins of the ancient chapel and tombs situated within the demesne, and immediately adjacent to the castle; and we shall only add in conclusion, that the grounds of the demesne, though of limited extent, and but little varied in elevation, are judiciously laid out, and present among its plantations many scenes of dignified character and beauty. P.

SAINT BRIDGET'S SHAWL,

BY T. E., AUTHOR OF "DARBY DOYLE," ETC.

AMONGST the many extraordinary characters with which this country abounds, such as fools, madmen, onshocks, omadhauns, hair-brains, crack-brains, and naturals, I have particularly taken notice of one. His character is rather singular. He begs about Newbridge, county of Kildare: he will accept of any thing offered him, except money—that he scornfully refuses; which fulfils the old adage, "None but a fool will refuse money." His habitation is the ruins of an old fort or ancient stronghold called Walsh's Castle, on the road to Kilcullen, near Arthgarvan, and within a few yards of the river Liffey, far away from any dwelling. There he lies on a bundle of straw, with no other covering save the clothes he wears all day. Many is the evening I have seen this poor crazy creature plod along the road to his desolate lodging. There is another stamp of singularity on his character: his name is Pat Mowlds, but who dare attempt to call him Pat? It must be Mr Mowlds, or he will not only be offended himself, but will surely offend those who neglect this respect. In general he is of a downcast, melancholy disposition, boasts of being very learned, is much delighted when any one gives him a ballad or old newspaper. Sometimes he gets into a very good humour, and will relate many anecdotes in a droll style.

About two years ago, as I happened to be sauntering along the border of the Curragh, I overtook this solitary being.

"A fine morning, Mr Mowlds," was my address.

"Yes, sur, thank God, a very fine morning; shure iv we don't have fine weather in July, when will we have it?"

"What a great space of ground this is to lie waste—what a quantity of provisions it would produce—what a number of people it would employ and feed!" said I.

"Oh, that's very thrue, sur; but was it all sown in pittaties, what would become or the poor sheep? Shure we want mutton as well as pittaties—besides, all the devarshun we have every year.—Why, thin, maybe ye have e'er an ould newspaper or ballit about ye?"

I said I had not, but a couple of Penny Journals should be at his service which I had in my pocket.

"Och, any thing at all that will keep a body amused, though I have got a great many of them; but among them all I don't see any piether or any account of the round tower